

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1.-17. (Canceled)

18. (New) A chemically synthesized double stranded short interfering nucleic acid (siNA) molecule, wherein:

- a) the siNA comprises a first strand and a second strand;
- b) the first strand comprises a sense region and the second strand comprises an antisense region ;
- c) each strand is 19 to 29 nucleotides in length; and
- d) the first strand includes a terminal cap moiety at the 5'-end, the 3'-end, or both of the 5' and 3' ends.

19. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said siNA molecule comprises no ribonucleotides.

20. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said siNA molecule comprises one or more ribonucleotides.

21. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said cap moiety comprises an abasic moiety.

22. (New) The siNA molecule of 21, wherein said abasic moiety comprises an inverted deoxyabasic moiety.

23. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said cap moiety comprises a glyceryl moiety.

24. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said cap moiety comprises a glyceryl moiety.

25. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said cap moiety comprises an inverted nucleotide moiety.

26. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said cap moiety comprises a locked nucleic acid (LNA) moiety.

27. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said cap moiety comprises a non-nucleotide moiety.
28. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein each strand comprises at least 19 nucleotides that are complementary to the nucleotides of the other strand.
29. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said siNA molecule is assembled from two separate oligonucleotide fragments wherein one fragment comprises the sense region and a second fragment comprises the antisense region of said siNA molecule.
30. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein said sense region is connected to the antisense region via a linker molecule.
31. (New) The siNA molecule of 30, wherein said linker molecule is a polynucleotide linker.
32. (New) The siNA molecule of 30, wherein said linker molecule is a non-nucleotide linker.
33. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein pyrimidine nucleotides in the sense region are 2'-O-methyl pyrimidine nucleotides.
34. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein purine nucleotides in the sense region are 2'-deoxy purine nucleotides.
35. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein pyrimidine nucleotides present in the sense region are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.
36. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein pyrimidine nucleotides of said antisense region are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides
37. (New) The siNA molecule of 18, wherein purine nucleotides of said antisense region are 2'-O-methyl purine nucleotides.
38. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the siNA molecule of 18 in an acceptable carrier or diluent.